

NSC BRIEFING

12 February 1958

ANTI-WESTERN TREND IN YEMEN

I. Yemen's anti-Western trend will probably speed up as a result of Crown Prince Badr's recent visit to Eastern Europe, Moscow and Peiping. Badr is the main booster of bloc aid and during his trip he made new diplomatic, aid and trade agreements.

A. According to the Yemeni charge in Cairo, Yemen and the USSR recently signed "a number of economic and trade agreements."

1. If announcement is true agreements presumably include previously offered 5-year economic loan, which Soviets valued at \$35,000,000.

2. Yemen has also been seeking additional military equipment, including jet fighters, and bloc personnel to operate them.

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4. Although several bloc doctors have been sent to Yemen during the past half year, two additional Soviet physicians arrived on 5 February to give a thorough check-up to the disease-ridden Imam.

B. Apparent success of the Soviet visit indicates that King Saud, who has been increasingly concerned over trend in Yemen, failed in efforts to discourage ailing Imam from yielding still further.

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II. Meanwhile, govt thwarted new conspiracy against the Imam on 22 January, which it exploited in an apparent effort to discredit Western influence in Yemen, and justify turning to Soviets for aid against "imperialism."

A. Yemen has used the incident to request the recall of the British charge.

B. Relations with Britain may be expected to deteriorate further.

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III. Recent agreement between Badr and Nasir on basic principles for confederation of Yemen with the union will probably lead only to closer collaboration in military matters and foreign affairs.

A. Imam appears primarily seeking merely to obtain variety of free services and to involve Egypt with British in Aden.

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